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The Crucifixion

Lippo Memmi (died 1356)

Gift of Mrs. W. Scott Fitz

The Crucifixion

ALTHOUGH religious painting since Renaissance times often does not lack serious intention, no thoughtful person would presume to suggest that it could equal the austere and spiritual, as well as intellectual, piety of the fourteenth century in Italy. The present picture is an interesting companion to the little Madonna by Fra Angelico, given to the Museum by the same generous donor in 1914 and described in the Bulletin of June for that year. That work has been said to symbolize Faith in Joy, while this

panel may be taken to represent Faith in Sorrow. Its ascription to Lippo Memmi relates it to a great school of art of which extant examples are rare. In its execution and its condition it is practically perfect. The subject is Christ on the Cross, with the Virgin seated at the left and Saint John seated at the right. The panel is quite small, measuring only $7\frac{1}{2}$ by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, but this restriction of space has forced the painter to greater concentration, and the emotional expression of the figures is more intense than is usual in Memmi's work. It is a mature creation, showing the painter at the height of his career.